

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments and remarks submitted herein. Applicants have amended the specification to include a paragraph claiming the benefit of priority to related applications. In addition, Applicants have amended the specification to add an abstract. The attached abstract corresponds to the English language abstract that was published in the PCT application.

Applicants also have canceled claims 1-36, and have added new claims 37-78. Claims 37-73 correspond to original claims 1-36, but their dependency has been amended. Claims 74-78 relate to a conjugate of hydroxyalkylstarch (HAS) and a low molecular weight substance, wherein the binding interaction between the HAS molecule and the low molecular weight substance includes at least one covalent bond between the terminal aldehyde group of the HAS molecule, or a functional group derived from the terminal aldehyde group, and a functional group of the low molecular weight substance. Support for claims 74-78 can be found in original claim 1, for example, and in Applicants' specification. For example, the specification at page 2 line 29 to page 3, line 5 discloses that a the binding interaction between a HAS molecule and a low molecular weight substance can be based on a covalent bond between the terminal aldehyde group of the HAS molecule or a functional group derived from the terminal aldehyde group, and a functional group of the low molecular weight substance. In addition, the specification at page 4, line 32 to page 5, line 6 discloses that the terminal aldehyde of a HAS molecule can be selectively oxidized to a carboxyl group or an activated carboxyl group, which then can be coupled to a low molecular weight substance to form an amide or thioester (i.e., covalent) linkage. Thus, no new matter has been added.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants ask that claims 37-78 be examined. The enclosed filing fee takes into account the pending claims following entry of this Preliminary Amendment. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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